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Why Protestantism Is Failing

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Why Protestantism Is Failing

SOME STARTLING FACTS ABOUT "MODERNISM" IN RELIGION, WHICH CONCERN EVERY AMERICAN

What Modernism in Religion is

"Historic Christianity" believes that the Bible is the inspired Word of God, that Jesus Christ was born of the virgin Mary, died upon the cross for the sins of mankind, was resurrected from the grave, and ascended to heaven. Protestantism believes that "the Bible only is the religion of Protestants".

In the Revival of Learning after the Dark Ages, the German universities helped much to clear away traditions in religion, and to assist the reformers in leading the people back to the Bible. But they did not stop, for soon they began to say of the Old Testament, "This is worthy of inspiration, and that is not worthy of inspiration." They continued their "higher criticism" for many years, one professor vying with

another in speculation, till at last there was nothing worthy of inspiration either in the Old or New Testaments in their minds, and religion was not a revelation from God but only a human philosophy. This "modernism" in religion—for that is what it is called—spread to Britain, and now it is running rampant in America.

You can generally tell the modernist preachers, for they can preach few of the specific doctrines of the Bible, but usually talk much of the "Social Gospel," "Brotherhood of Man," "Fatherhood of God," "Beautiful Life of Jesus," etc., etc.

Fruit of Modernism in Religion

In Germany this skepticism in religion broke down the only standard of morals which Christian nations have and, henceforth, the Christian standard among individuals and nations that "thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" was shattered, and Germany considered herself the super-nation with little or no obligations to other nations. Her atrocities revealed her utter moral break-down. Result: World Wars I and II.

England has fallen into the same spiritual decay, and now America is religiously sinking into religious chaos. A few months ago John D. Rockefeller, Jr., (over whose church in New York City the noted modernist, Emerson Fosdick, presides) advocated strongly that the church should be composed of "all good people," and, therefore, should do away with baptism and the Lord's supper. Of course, since there are "good people" among non-church members, we must accept them. There could be no logical stopping place till we had all the "good" Mohammedans, Hindus and others in the fold. But what a fold! Jesus said: "No man cometh unto the Father but by ME." (John 14:6.) And again. "Except a man be born of water and the spirit, he can not enter the kingdom of God." (John 3:5.)

Query to John D.: "What is to **make** them good?" Jesus came **to make** them good—to seek and **save** that which is lost, while John D.'s religion is merely to gather together all who happen to be good. I don't suppose John's loose modernism ever reformed a drunkard in the world, but the gospel of Jesus, which he would lay aside, has reformed millions of them. The Episcopal Church would not stand for such infidelity and withdrew from the Federal Council in which John's preacher, Fosdick, is an influential character. Jesus commanded baptism and the Lord's Supper and said: "He that hath my commandments and KEEPETH THEM, he it is that loveth me," (John 14:21) not lay them aside as John D. has done.

**"The Federal Council of Churches of Christ"
—Protestant Churches—is Modernistic**

This Federal Council is a super-organization, including nearly all the prominent denominations of about 25,000,000 people, and was established about twenty-five years ago. It professes to speak for all Protestantism. Through its influence it has tried to eliminate from the air all Protestant programs they do not control, and to have their own programs free. Hundreds of individual Protestant programs have been eliminated by the program of the Federal Council, and this council tries to crowd its own program into the ears of millions of hearers.

Many of the leaders of the Federal Council are modernistic to an extreme. Fosdick (pastor of Rockefeller's church) is their most popular radio speaker. In his "Modern Use of the Bible," p. 157, Fosdick says: "Biblical miracles will more and more become unreal ghosts lost in antiquity and, gradually becoming dimmer, will disappear in utter incredulity."

Dr. Francis J. McConnell was president of the Federal Council in its earlier years, and is still prominent in it. He is Bishop of the New York area of

the Methodist Church. He talks much of the "social gospel," which is a smooth way to divert minds from his unbelief. He says: **"Is not this tendency to deify Jesus more heathen than Christian? Are we not most truly Christian when we cut loose from a heathen propensity and take Jesus simply for the character that He was and for the ideal that He is?"** ("The Christlike God," p. 48, published by Abingdon Press, New York.) But it is not we but **Jesus himself** who announces His deity. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." (John 14:9.) "I and my Father are one." (John 10:30.) The Jews took up stones to stone Him because "Thou, being a man, **makest thyself God.**" (John 10:33.)

Dr. George A. Buttrick is pastor of the Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church in New York City and was elected president of the Council in 1940, and now is on a very powerful executive council. In his book, "The Christian Fact and Modern Doubt" (published in 1935 by Charles Scribners Sons, N. Y.), he says of Israel: "The Old Testament is a collection of their religious writings. **In Genesis are their myths and legends—**" (p. 176.). In other words, God never spoke to Adam, Noah, Enoch, Abraham and Moses.

In the year 106 or 107, A. D., the heathen author, Pliny, wrote a famous letter to Trajan, Emperor of Rome, about the Christians whom he was persecuting, and says of their worship: "They were accustomed on a stated day to assemble before sunrise and to join together in singing hymns to Christ as to a **deity.**" This letter is endorsed as genuine by Edward Gibbon, the noted skeptic, in his "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," Ch. 16.

Is it not wonderful that 2,000 years this side of Christ we have acute modernists who know more about the divinity of Christ than the men who started the Christian religion, and who believed that Christ is deity, and who turned the world upside down because of their belief!

Dr. Buttrick says: "We do not know"; but Paul says, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him, against that day." (2 Tim. 1:12.) Which shall we follow?

Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam, of the Methodist Church, is president of the Federal Council, 1945. In his volume on "Preaching in a Revolutionary Age," (published by Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, New York, Nashville) which was delivered before the Yale divinity students in 1944, Dr. Oxnam says, on page 79:

"Hugh Walpole, in *Wintersmoon*, tells of a father and son at church. The aged rector read from the Old Testament and the boy learned of the terrible God who sent plagues upon the people and created fiery serpents to assault them. That night, when the father passed the boy's bedroom, the boy called him, put his arms around his father's neck and, drawing him close, said: 'Father, you hate Jehovah. So do I. I loathe Him, dirty bully.' We have long since rejected a conception of reconciliation associated historically with the idea of a Deity that is loathsome. God, for us, cannot be thought of as an angry, awful, avenging Being who because of Adam's sin must have His Shylockian pound of flesh. No wonder the honest boy in **justifiable repugnance** could say, 'dirty bully'."

God was simply punishing the Israelites for their sins. Those who looked upon the brazen serpent were healed. Jesus endorsed the story for he said: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." (John 3:14, 15.) So Jesus must have been a "dirty bully" too, for endorsing the "dirty bully" God of the Old Testament. Would you call that blasphemy, or not?

If God is a "dirty bully" for being angry with the wicked, then Christ, too, is a "dirty bully," for on the stubborn leaders in his day "he looked around about on them in **anger**". (Mark 3:5.) Again He denounced, "Woe unto you, scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites . . . Ye serpents, ye generation of vi-

pers, **how can ye escape** the damnation of hell?" (Matt. 23:29-33. Read the whole chapter.)

If Dr. Oxnam and his fellow modernists "loathe" the God of the Old Testament because He is "awful" (as he puts it), they will have to loathe Paul for saying, "Our God is a consuming fire." (Heb. 12:29.) If they reject the Hebrew's God because He was an "avenging Being," and because He punished rebellious ones, then they will have to reject Christ, also, for telling the story of the selfish, rich man who awoke in torment for his sins, and tried to change it, but could not.

These modernists leave nothing. As the Old Testament is "myths and legends" of the Jews, so the New is "myths and legends" of Christians. It may be, sometime, that an irate laity will arise and charge them with obtaining money under false pretense, for receiving salaries to teach the religion of Jesus then deliberately tearing it down. How can Protestantism do anything but decay under such unbelief.

But the Bible Itself is a Miracle

The modernist rejects the "reconciliation" or atonement of the Bible, yet the animal sacrifices of the Old Testament (and even of the heathen world) impress the idea, "You die for me"; and the lambs pointed to "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." (John 1:29.) Christ was a "Lamb slain [sacrificed in type] from the foundation of the world." (Rev. 13:8.) Everything in the Bible, directly or indirectly, points forward or backward to the cross of Christ, and has as its theme one nation, one Person, and one thought. That nation is the ancestors of Christ, that Person is Christ himself, and that thought is the salvation He brings to the world. Read carefully Isaiah, 53rd chapter: "He was wounded for OUR transgressions; he was bruised for OUR iniquities; the chastisement of OUR peace was upon him, and with HIS stripes we are healed," etc., etc.

Now as the Bible was written by about forty different men through about 1,500 years, and as it all bears on one theme, the only reasonable conclusion is that there was a Divine Mind behind those writers and compilers, showing what to write and compile.

It shows that the Bible came from God because it could not possibly have come from man. All objections of the modernists against the Bible fade into thin air compared with this Unity of the Word of God. There is nothing like it in any other religion. THE BIBLE ITSELF IS A MIRACLE.

What Are You Going To Do About It?

You who are carried along by these modernists in the Federal Council, are you going to sit quiet and pay these men to knock the Christian foundation from beneath your feet? Take this tract to your "pastor" and elders and ask them what they think of it. Ask them if they endorse this modernism. Ask them if they believe that Jesus Christ was born of the virgin Mary, and that His body was raised from the dead. If they affirm that they do, ask them if it is not time that something was done to stop the unbelief? John says to YOU, "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him Godspeed, for he that biddeth him Godspeed is partaker in his evil deeds." (2 John 10, 11.) Can you be saved unless you fight the good fight of faith?

Be ye not unequally yoked together with **unbelievers** * * * what part hath he that believeth with an infidel [**unbeliever**] * * * Come out from among them, and be ye separate, **saith the Lord.**" (2 Cor. 6:14-18.)

Cause and Remedy of This Apostasy

The power behind the throne in this great apostasy is "the Kingdom of the Clergy," as one great reformer called it. In the New Testament there is no such distinction as clergy and laity. All Christians were "kings and **priests** unto God." (Rev. 1:6.) One Christian had just as much right as another to preach, pray, baptize and administer communion. When scattered **all** Christians "went everywhere preaching the word." (Acts 8:4.) Every Home was to be a Bible training school, for fathers were to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Every preacher was to be a Bible seminary, developing teachers for the Church, for Paul commanded the young preacher, Timothy: "The things which thou hast heard of me among many witnesses,

the same commit thou to **faithful** men who shall be able to TEACH others also." (2 Tim. 2:2.) Where is there a preacher today who is developing TEACHERS in the Church, as Paul commanded preachers to do? No wonder that people are famishing for the Word of God, and are going into captivity to unbelief! The preachers seem afraid these teachers might root them out of their unscriptural feathered nests and compel them to evangelize as Paul did.

In the New Testament we do not read of "the pastor" of a local church, for the elders were the pastors, feeders, and were also called bishops, overseers. (See 1 Tim. 3; Titus 1; Acts 20:17, 28.) From among the "faithful men" whom Timothy and all other preachers were to develop into teachers, the future elders (bishops) of the local churches were to come. There was a plurality in each local church. (Acts 14:23; Phil. 1:1.) Every local church was complete in itself with its bishops and deacons, in church government, to perpetuate itself through the ages, without any faith-destroying seminaries, Bible schools and colleges. From the first catechetical school in Alexandria, Egypt, to the universities of Germany, and to Harvard, Yale and Princeton, etc., have come apostasy, and hobbyism, and modernism with its unbelief. "The wisdom of men is foolishness with God," and the saddening decay of Protestantism proves this. The only remedy is to get back to "The First Church," the true Church of Christ of the New Testament, in its life, work, worship and government (without the inspired men but with the inspired Bible). And when we do that, divisions of Protestantism will largely vanish, for most of our divisions come through adding to the Word.

NOTE—If you are interested in "The First Church," or in additional copies of this tract, get in touch with the name stamped below, or D. A. Sommer, 918 Congress Ave., Indianapolis 8, Ind.